

Dorothy G. Helmer papers

S0631

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Rare Books and Manuscripts
140 North Senate Avenue
Indianapolis, Indiana, 46204
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Summary Information

Repository	Rare Books and Manuscripts
Creator	Helmer, Dorothy Garr, 1908-1999
Title	Dorothy G. Helmer papers
Date	1973
Extent	0.01 Cubic feet 1 folder
Language	English
Text [Folder]	S631

Preferred Citation

Dorothy G. Helmer papers, Rare Books and Manuscripts, Indiana State Library

Biographical Note

Dorothy Garr Helmer was born on January 15, 1908 in St. Cloud, Minnesota to Dr. John Louis and Edna Mabel Helmer. She spent her childhood in Bunker Hill, Indiana then moved with her parents to Indianapolis. Miss Helmer graduated from Butler University in 1928 and also attended the John Herron Art School. She was a self-employed interior designer in Indianapolis for 35 years. She was a member of the Delta Gamma sorority, American Society of Interior Designers, and the National Society of Arts and Letters. She was also a board member of the Indianapolis Propylaeum. She died at the age of 91 on April 24, 1999.

Sources:

"Dorothy Garr Helmer." *The Indianapolis Star*, April 26, 1999, B6.

"Former Kokomoan is Decorator." *Kokomo Tribune*, January 29, 1961, 14.

"They Achieve." *The Indianapolis Star*, January 12, 1947, 16.

Historical Note

The Indianapolis Propylaeum was founded by May Wright Sewell (1844-1920). The word propylaeum, comes from the Greek word "propylaea" and was used to represent "gateway to culture". May Wright Sewell and a committee of women from the Indianapolis Woman's Club sold stock certificates to raise the money to build their own facility for meetings. The group's first building was located at 17 East North Street and was dedicated on January 27, 1891. The building of the World War Memorial Plaza required the group to relocate. The "Schmidt-Schaf House" (circa 1891) at 1410 N. Delaware St. was available and the organization was able to purchase it by selling more stock certificates. The Victorian Mansion was repaired and redecorated and the club opened it on October 16, 1923. The Indianapolis Propylaeum continues to offer a venue for events for both members and the community and it is promoted as "The Gateway to a Classic Experience."

Sources:

Griffith, Margot Doane. 1974. *Historical Sketch, the Propylaeum Story: "Many Times Told."*. Indianapolis: s.n..

IN.gov. "Indianapolis Propylaeum." *Indiana Historical Bureau*. Accessed September 17, 2015. <http://www.in.gov/history/markers/IndyProp.htm>.

ThePropylaeum.org. "Our Founder: May Wright Sewell (1844-1920)." *The Indianapolis Propylaeum*. Accessed September 17, 2015. <http://thepropylaeum.org/about/our-founder/>.

Scope and Contents

This collection contains typescript written by Dorothy G. Helmer regarding the Indianapolis Propylaeum's Mansion located at 1410 N. Delaware Street. Detailed information about the house as well as genealogical information about the original owner, John W. Schmidt (1856-1914), and the second owner, Joseph C. Schaf (1859-1934), are included. The typescript was added to sections 7 and 8 of the National Register of Historic Places nomination form that the Indianapolis Propylaeum submitted to the National Park Service in May, 1973. The home was approved and included in the National Registry of Historic Places that same year.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged chronologically.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Rare Books and Manuscripts

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Legal title, copyright, and literary rights reside with Rare Books and Manuscripts, Indiana State Library, Indianapolis, IN. All requests to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted to Rare Books and Manuscripts.

Custodial History

This collection was received by Rare Books and Manuscripts as a donation.

Accruals

No further additions are expected.

Processing Information

Collection processing completed 2015/09/17 by Laura Eliason. EAD finding aid created 2015/09/17 by Laura Eliason.

Related Materials

Related Archival Material

Materials relating to this collection may be found in the following collections at the Indiana State Library, Indianapolis, IN:

ISLI 374.2 G854H: Historical Sketches, Indianapolis Propylaeum: "Many Times Told"

ISLI 374.2 I388PRY: Indianapolis Propylaeum

S2865: Helen Glessner Scott papers

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- National Register of Historic Places.
- Propylaeum of Indianapolis.

Geographic Name(s)

- Indianapolis (Ind.)

Subject(s)

- Women--Societies and clubs